

Einstein: A Short Bio

A motivating reading for English learners

Level: A2 · Pair work

Date: _____

Students: _____



Key Vocabulary — Words to know before you read

Word	Meaning (Spanish)	Word	Meaning (Spanish)	Illus.
scientist	científico / científica	physics	física	
born	nacer / nacido(a)	theory	teoría	
prize	premio	famous	famoso / famosa	

Reading Text — Einstein: A Short Bio | Read with your partner

Instruction: Read the text with your partner. The word **WAS** is highlighted in red. The word **WERE** is highlighted in blue. Count each one as you read!

— Paragraph 1 —

Albert Einstein was born on March 14, 1879, in the city of Ulm, in Germany. He was a very curious child. His family was warm and supportive. His father Hermann was an engineer, and his mother Pauline was a talented pianist. Their home was always full of music and great ideas.


— Paragraph 2 —

When Einstein was a student, he was not always the best in his class, but he was always passionate about physics and mathematics. His favorite question was: "What was light, really?" His teachers were sometimes surprised by his deep questions. He was different and that was his greatest gift.

— Paragraph 3 —

In 1905, Einstein published his famous Theory of Relativity. The equation $E = mc^2$ was part of this theory. It was a revolutionary idea it changed the way scientists understood the universe. In

1921, Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics. He was one of the most famous scientists in history. His ideas were not just brilliant they were a gift to all of humanity.


 **Grammar Note — Remember the rule**

WAS → I / he / she / it

He was a great scientist.
She was born in Ulm.
His home was full of ideas.

WERE → you / we / they / plural

His teachers were surprised.
His ideas were revolutionary.
They were a gift to humanity.

 **Activities — Answer with your partner**

Activity 1 — Count! How many times do these words appear?

Circle every **WAS** and **WERE** in the text as you read. Then write your count here:

WAS appears _____ times.

(Answer key: WAS appears 14 times)

WERE appears _____ times.

(Answer key: WERE appears 4 times)

Activity 2 - Answer the questions about the text.

1. Where was Einstein born?

He was born in _____.

2. What was his favourite question?

His favourite question was _____.

3. What was the equation from his famous theory?

The equation was _____.

4. What prize was Einstein awarded in 1921?

He was awarded the _____.

Activity 3 - Fill in the blank: WAS or WERE?

Use the grammar note above to choose the correct verb.

1. Einstein _____ born in Germany.
2. His teachers _____ surprised by his deep questions.
3. His mother _____ a talented pianist.

4. His ideas _____ a gift to all of humanity.
5. The equation $E = mc^2$ _____ part of the Theory of Relativity.

Answer key: 1. was · 2. were · 3. was · 4. were · 5. was

Activity 4 - Pair speaking!

Take turns with your partner. Ask and answer these questions:

1. Who was Albert Einstein?
2. Where was he from?
3. What was his famous equation?